

## IMPORTANT FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

# *Care of Clarinets*

### **GREASING TENON CORKS**

Your clarinet is made in five parts. These are (from top to bottom): mouthpiece, barrel, upper joint, lower joint, and bell. The barrel and bell are so called because of their similarity in shape to those objects.

Care must be taken in assembling these parts to prevent damage. Each of the parts are held firmly together by means of tenon corks. When new, the corks will fit very tightly. But eventually they will compress as they are “broken in.” The tenon corks have been given a thorough coat of cork grease at the music store but this will soon dry out. It will be necessary for you to apply cork grease as needed to make the joints go together smoothly and easily. When putting together or taking apart the clarinet, hold the joints so that the fingers do not exert pressure on the clarinet rods. All the parts are easily put together if you use a gently twisting motion as you push.

### **THE MOUTHPIECE**

A mouthpiece that is not cleaned often not only becomes unsanitary but the bore becomes smaller and this affects the tone. The mouthpiece can be easily cleaned by using regular dish detergent, warm water and a small brush (available at the music store) or a very small (babies size) toothbrush. Clean the mouthpiece at least once a week.

### **THE BARREL, UPPER JOINT, LOWER JOINT, and BELL**

DO NOT WASH the rest of the clarinet using water — this can damage the pads that cover the tone holes. Instead, take off the mouthpiece, drop a cleaning swab down the bell and pull it through the instrument a couple of times. This should be done after each and every use. This will remove excess moisture that built up during practice or performance. Another way to prevent damage this way is to use fuzzy joint inserts (called Pad-Savers, available at your music store) when not in use.

### **PREVENTING TROUBLE**

1. Always keep the flute in the case when not in use!
2. Do not carry pencils or other items in the case which could damage your instrument.
3. At home, after playing, open the case for about an hour so the clarinet can dry thoroughly. Be sure to put your instrument out of reach of any little brothers or sisters.
4. If you have any problems concerning your instrument, see your music teacher, the music store representative, or have your parents call the music store.